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Johnsons to Return for a

By BETTY BEALE
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CPYRGHT

Wedding

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Former President and Mrs. Johnson are coming to Washington this weekend for the wedding of Marie Fehmer and Dr. Andrew J. Chiarodo, professor of biology at Georgetown University.

The bride-to-be, a slender, sandy-haired Dallas girl who shared great moments of history with the Johnsons as his secretary for six or seven years, has been described by her former boss as "a wonderful human being—probably one of the two or three people in the world who would get the 10 Johnson votes—the three Robbs, the three Nungents, the two grandparents, and the two more to come."

She was a bridesmaid in Lynda's wedding. A devout Catholic, she was spiritual counselor to Luci. And she did everything she could for all the Johnsons.

She was like one of the family, and having her around, Mrs. Johnson once said, "was as much of a joy for the wife of the boss as for the boss."

No matter where the President was, she was not far away with her notebook.

IT WAS MARIE who, on that fateful day in Dallas in November 1963, took down the words of the presidential oath as Nicholas Katzenbach read them to her from Washington.

When Johnson asked Atty. Gen. Robert Kennedy if he should take the oath in Dallas and Bobby said he should, the new President asked for the exact wording. Bobby had his deputy look it up and call back.

It was Marie who typed the addition to President Johnson's televised remarks of March 31, 1968 that shook the world.

She had known since the spring of 1967 that the President was not running again, but not till that Sunday eve did she transcribe the paragraph that began, "I shall not seek and I will not accept—"

Her future husband is a tall, handsome Italian-American who graduated from Fordham University in 1956 and got his Ph.D. at Washington University, Missouri, in '63. His fiancée graduated in 1962 from the University of Texas, where she worked her way through college.

They will be married in the Church of the Epiphany in Georgetown on Saturday at 2 o'clock, and all the Johnsons will be there, with the exception of Luci who is expecting a baby next month.

IT WILL BE THE PRESIDENT'S first return to Washington except for the day of the Eisenhower funeral, and then nobody knew where to reach them. Not till their departure was it learned that they had stopped at the Sheraton Park.

Their friends are afraid that an announcement of this visit—which may last two or three days—may cause him to call it off. He has done everything he can to avoid the spotlight and keep out of print since retiring to the LBJ Ranch. He has turned down many hundreds of requests for interviews.

Probably only someone as selfless and unassuming in her devotion to all his family as Miss Fehmer could get him to come up here now.

At least this columnist hopes that this story will not deprive the Johnsons of the pleasure of having her boss attend.

The wedding will be very quiet, with only the families and a few close friends attending. It will be over in time to give Lynda Robb ample opportunity to entertain her parents in her new house.

Maybe this is why she was out shopping everywhere yesterday morning for the right kind of cherries for cherries jubilee on Saturday night.

PERLE MESTA is sending out invitations this week for a big bash at the new Motion Picture Association headquarters on Jan. 9.

Ethel Merman, guest of honor, is flying here for the dinner of 70 that will be followed by a replay of the film that enhanced both Perle's and Ethel's reputations, "Call Me Madam." That's the storm of P.M.'s mission to Luxembourg as Harry Truman's envoy.

Mrs. Mesta had Lester Lanin and his orchestra reserved for dancing afterwards but found out Monday that wall-to-wall carpeting in every room of the MPA made dancing somewhat out of the question.

Perhaps she hasn't thought of one solution to that problem — unrolling linoleum on top of the carpeting and holding the sides in place with furniture legs.

She may settle for after-movie dancing at her apartment in the Sheraton Park.

DAVID PACKARD, the multimillionaire deputy secretary of defense who rarely shows up at a Washington party, was at the Kermit Roosevelts cocktail supper last evening for Iranian Ambassador and Mrs. Afshar. But Mrs. Afshar was not there.

"My wife has pneumonia. She has a high fever," said the worried looking, handsome envoy. "She caught cold at the Symphony Ball."

So did a lot of other women, he added.

How right he was. The Sheraton Park Ballroom was so chilled five of the women at Perle Mesta's tables, including the French ambassador's wife, had to send for their fur wraps.

Why hotels can't adjust rooms so that people neither freeze nor burn up is the mystery of this technological age.

Otherwise, the ball was a great success, both socially and financially.

Mrs. Packard, who accompanied her husband to the Roosevelts' charming small party at the Sulgrave Club, admitted they did not go out often.

But her husband added, "We go out more often here than we did before."

Secretary of the Air Force Bob Seamans was there, and CIA Director and Mrs. Richard Helms, who sat with the Packards at one of the six or seven supper tables set up for the convenience and conversational comfort of the guests.

This was the kind of cocktail party men like.

Sen. and Mrs. Frank Church were chatting with Deputy Counsel to the President and Mrs. Clark Mollenhoff who later supped with the Archie Roosevelts.

More praise for Vice President Agnew's news media speech was heard at this table, and Clark said that a lot more had come from reporters.

THE EDWARD CLARRS popped into Washington from Austin, Tex., Monday for a 24-hour stay and a unique meeting. Lady Bird Johnson was one of the few absentee members.

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